

Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 AF-10 ARA-06 EA-07 EUR-12

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TRSE-00 EB-08 BIB-01 COME-00 FCC-01 OIC-02 OTPE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2642

USIA WASHDC PRIORITY

INFO NACC COLLECTIVE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 SECTIONS NEW DELHI 5234

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PORG

SUBJECT: NACC FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING: NON-ALIGNED NEWS POOL

SUMMARY: THE NEW DELHI CONFERENCE OF THE NON-ALIGNED COORDINATING BUREAU ENDORSED THE REPORTS ON COOPERATION IN THE EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION ISSUING FROM CONFERENCES IN CAIRO AND TUNIS EARLIER THIS YEAR, WHILE AVOIDING ANTI-WESTERN POLEMICS AND PROPOSING TO CONCENTRATE FURTHER EFFORTS ON THE PROBLEMS ACQUIRING INFRASTRUCTURE AND TRAINING PERSONNEL FOR A NON-ALIGNED NEWS POOL. BUT DEFAULT, QUIET LEADERSHIP OF THIS ASPECT OF NON-ALIGNED COOPERATION PASSED BACK TO YUGOSLAVIA BECAUSE OF THE DISAPPEARANCE OF INDIA'S MOHAMMED YUNUS AND THE CURRENT UNCERTAINTY ABOUT THE FATE OF INDIA'S NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY, SAMACHAR, FOLLOWING INDIA'S ELECTIONS LAST MONTH. END SUMMARY.

1. CONSIDERATION BY THE NEW DELHI CONFERENCE OF FOREIGN MINISTERS OF THE COORDINATING BUREAU OF NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES OF COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF INFORMATION, AN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AGENDA ITEM CARRIED OVER FROM THE COLOMBO SUMMIT LAST YEAR, PRODUCED THREE RESULTS UNDRAMATIC IN THEMSELVES, BUT WITH POSSIBLE LONG-RANGE SIGNIFICANCE.

2. FIRST, BY DEFAULT, YUGOSLAVIA, LONG A FERVENT PROPONENT, RECOVERED LEADERSHIP OF THE NON-ALIGNED NEWS POOL MOVEMENT FROM INDIA. THIS WAS PRINCIPALLY BECAUSE OF THE

DISAPPEARANCE OF MOHAMMED YUNUS, FORMER "SPECIAL ENVOY"
OF INDIAN PRIME MINISTER GANDHI, WHO HAD BEEN ELECTED
CHAIRMAN OF THE COORDINATION COMMITTEE OF THE PRESS AGENCIES
POOL OF NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES AT A MINISTERIAL LEVEL
MEETING IN NEW DELHI LAST JULY, AND BECAUSE OF UNCERTAINTY
ABOUT THE FATE OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY, SAMACHAR,
SINCE THE CONGRESS PARTY DEFEAT LAST MONTH.

3. SECOND, WITHOUT YUNUS, DIATRIBES AGAINST ALLEGED WILLFUL
DISTORTIONS BY THE WESTERN PRESS OF DEVELOPMENTS IN THE
THIRD WORLD ALSO DISAPPEARED. INDIAN DELEGATE MRS. SUMITRA
KULKARNI, RECENTLY REELECTED TO THE LOWER HOUSE AS A NEW
MEMBER OF JAGJIVAN RAM'S CONGRESS FOR DEMOCRACY, PRESENTED
TO THE NEW DELHI CONFERENCE THE REPORT OF THE FIRST MEETING
IN CAIRO LAST JANUARY, OF THE COORDINATION COMMITTEE OF THE
PRESS AGENCIES POOL OF NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES, OVER WHICH
YUNUS HAD PRESIDED. SHE TOLD DELEGATES IN NEW DELHI THAT THE
OBJECTIVE OF THE POOL WAS NOT TO CONFRONT OR SUPPLANT
WELL-ESTABLISHED PRESS AGENCIES IN COUNTRIES OUTSIDE
THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT, BUT TO SUPPLEMENT THEM WHEREVER
NECESSARY. "EACH NATION HAS THE RIGHT TO DETERMINE ITS
OWN POLICIES ON FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND COMMENT," SHE
SAID. "THE POOL, HOWEVER, WOULD SEEK TO PROMOTE COOPERATION
BETWEEN NATIONAL AGENCIES IN ORDER THAT WE MAY BE BETTER
INFORMED ABOUT ONE ANOTHER AND THUS A FULLER AND MORE
OBJECTIVE PICTURE OF THE PROGRESS AND DYNAMISM WITHIN OUR
COUNTRIES CAN BE PROJECTED TO THE WORLD COMMUNITY OF
NATIONS. IT IS EVIDENT THAT THE AIM IS NOT TO CONFRONT BUT
TO COOPERATE."

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4. THIRD, INCREASED EMPHASIS HAS BEEN PLACED ON "AN
URGENT NEED FOR THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES TO OVERCOME THE
EXISTING DEFICIENCIES IN THEIR COMMUNICATION INFRASTRUCTURE
AND AVAILABILITY OF TRAINED PERSONNEL" (A QUOTE FROM THE
CAIRO MEETING REPORT). MRS. KULKARNI OUTLINED FOR THE NEW
DELHI CONFERENCE CONCRETE TASKS IN THIS REGARD THAT WERE
ENTRUSTED TO SPECIFIC NATIONAL NEWS AGENCIES AT THE CAIRO
MEETING. ACCORDING TO A SAMACHAR REPORT OF HER PLENARY SPEECH,
THEY INCLUDE: THE YUGOSLAV NEWS AGENCY TO EXAMINE THE QUESTION
OF DEVELOPMENT AND CIRCULATION OF INFORMATION AMONG THE VARIOUS
COLLECTION AND DISTRIBUTION CENTERS OF THE POOL; THE IRAQI AGENCY

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INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 AF-10 ARA-06 EA-07 EUR-12
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TO PREPARE AN INVENTORY OF THE TECHNICAL MEANS AND FACILITIES OF TRANSMISSION EXISTING AMONG PRESS AGENCIES OF THE POOL: CUBA'S PRENSA LATINA TO UNDERTAKE A FEASIBILITY STUDY OF COLLECTIVE PURCHASE OF SPECIFIC EQUIPMENT FOR PRESS AGENCIES AND STANDARDIZATION OF THE EQUIPMENT TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE; AZAP AND MENA-- OF ZAIRE AND EGYPT, RESPECTIVELY--TO ELABORATE A POLICY FOR TRAINING JOURNALISTIC AND TECHNICAL CADRES IN NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES.

5. TUNISIAN DELEGATE TAIEB SAHBANI PRESENTED THE REPORT OF THE FIRST MEETING OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COUNCIL ON MASS MEDIA AND INFORMATION OF THE NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES HELD IN TUNIS FROM FEBRUARY 28 TO MARCH 1, 1977. ADDITIONAL STEPS SUGGESTED BY THE COUNCIL, HE SAID, INCLUDED A MEETING OF NON-ALIGNED RADIO AND TELEVISION REPRESENTATIVES DURING THE LAST QUARTER OF THIS YEAR TO PROMOTE CLOSER COOPERATION; A MEETING OF EXPERTS TO BE HELD IN BAGHDAD BEGINNING MAY 2 TO EXAMINE TELEGRAPHIC FEES, AND A SURVEY OF THE POTENTIAL
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MEANS OF COMMUNICATION AMONG NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES BASED ON A QUESTIONNAIRE ALREADY SENT OUT TO MEMBER STATES.

6. THE NEW DELHI CONFERENCE FINAL COMMUNIQUE NOTED THE ABOVE IN ONE SENTENCE: "THE BUREAU WELCOMED THE

GROWING COOPERATION AMONG NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES IN THE FIELD OF INFORMATION AND MASS MEDIA AND ENDORSED THE DECISIONS TAKEN AT CAIRO AND TUNIS.

7. IT WAS ANNOUNCED THAT THE NEXT MEETING OF THE COORDINATING COMMITTEE WOULD BE HELD AT KINSHASHA AT A DATE YET TO BE AGREED UPON AROUND THE MIDDLE OF THIS YEAR, AND THAT THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COUNCIL WOULD BE CONVENED IN HAVANA BEFORE THE 1979 SUMMIT.

8. INDIAN PRESS PROFESSIONALS HAVE NEVER BEEN ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THE NON-ALIGNED PRESS POOL. MANY SAW IN LAST JULY'S NEW DELHI MEETING A POLITICAL MOVE TO GIVE INDIA MOMENTUM ON THE EVE OF THE COLOMBO SUMMIT. THE HEADLINE IN THE INDEPENDENT STATESMAN OF APRIL 12 SAYS, "INDIA TO SUPPORT NEWS POOL," AS IF THERE HAD BEEN SOME QUESTION ABOUT IT. THE STORY BEGAN: "DOUBTS ABOUT INDIA'S CONTINUED BACKING TO THE POOL OF NON-ALIGNED PRESS AGENCIES AFTER THE CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT WERE SET AT REST TODAY" WHEN MRS KULKARNI REQUESTED THE FOREIGN MINISTERS' CONFERENCE TO ENDORSE THE CAIRO REPORT. INDEPENDENT INDIAN EXPRESS, AN OPPONENT OF CONGRESS PARTY RULE UNDER THE EMERGENCY, HEADLINED: "NEWS POOL DOES NOT AIM AT CONFRONTATION."

9. ON THE EVE OF THE NEW DELHI CONFERENCE, THE RESIDENT TANJUG CORRESPONDENT GAVE A RELAXED VIEW OF HOW THE NEWS POOL ISSUE WOULD BE HANDLED. IN BRIEF, HE BELIEVED THAT WITH YUNUS GONE AND SAMACHAR IN DISARRAY, THE YUGOSLAV DELEGATION NEED NOT STRAIN TO KEEP SOME FOR-LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WARD MOVEMENT GING UNDER ITS GENERAL DIRECTION. HE SAID THAT YUNUS HAD "SET BACK" THE PRESS POOL IDEA IMMEASURABLY BY REPRESENTING ITS GOALS AND GIVING IT A BAD NAME, PARTICULARLY IN THE WEST. HE SAID INDIAN COLLEAGUES SHARED THIS VIEW, BUT HE RECOGNIZED THAT THEY WERE NOT VERY KEEN ON THE UGOSLAV APPROACH EITHER, IN PARTICULAR THE SUGGESTION THAT BELGRADE BECOME THE CCENTER FOR POOL ACTIVITY. IN ANY CASE, THE YUGOSLAV DELEGATION APPARENTLY KEPT ITS HEAD LOW ON THIS QUESTION AT THE NEW DELHI CONFERENCE, AND THE PRESS POOL ITEM DID NOT BECOME AN ISSUE.
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